MENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that AIDS virus lantiden has been recently detected in some African lions in the Shakkar-Baug Zoo in the foothills of mout Gir in Junagarh;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what measures have been taken to check the spread of AIDS virus in other animals in the zoo ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) to (c) It has been reported that Shakkarbaug Zoo does not have African Lion. There is also no report of AIDS Virus in any animal.

"Botanical Survey of India"

3586. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) Whether Government are aware of the sorry state of affairs in the Western Circle Office of the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) where thousands of priceless documents over hundred years old are gathering dust and are under ridden;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any inquiry into the working of BSI; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof stating the restoration measures taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) to (c) The Government is aware of the conditions prevailing in the Western Circle Office of the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) at Pune, which is in possession of several old and valuable herbarium collections and documents on the Flora of India. These are presently housed in a building which is more than 100 years old and needs repairs and renovation. The Government have already decided to construct a new office-cum-herbarium building to take care of the difficulties being faced and to properly maintain the herbarium collections and documents. The construction of the new building is to start soon. Pending construction of the new building, it has been decided to undertake necessary repairs and restoration measures to the old building, without altering the original facade and architecture. Necessary instructions have also been issued to the BSI to ensure safety and proper upkeep of the herbarium collections, documents etc.

Discovery of Radio activities in Himachal Pradesh

3587. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the recent discovery of radio activity in a number of villages in Himachal Pradesh far excess of prescribed safety norms in the soil, air, water and vegetation posing serious health hazards to the inhabitants; and

(b) If so, what preventive measures have been taken/proposed to be taken by Government to check it ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) and (b) The Atomic Minerals Division of the Department of Atomic Energy measures radio activity in soil for programme for exploration of Uranium. The radio activity measurement conducted in Himachal Pradesh indicates less than permissible level of radiation in soil, air, water & vegetation and not causing any health hazard to the inhabitants. Therefore, no preventive measures are required to be taken by the Government.